

million "latchkey" children go home alone after school. Children who are unsupervised during the after-school hours are more likely to engage in delinquent and other high-risk behaviors, such as alcohol and drug use. After school programs can provide safe, drug-free, supervised and cost-effective havens for children. Quality after-school programs can provide adult supervision of children during after-school hours, and they can provide children with healthy alternatives to and insulation from risk-taking and delinquent behavior. Students should be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular school activities. Studies have shown that a student in one after school activity is almost 50 times less likely to commit crime.

One important aspect of the bill is the collaboration of public and private local organizations. I am pleased that faith based organizations have been included in the bill as collaborators in youth development activities. These organizations have proven effective in addressing the needs of youth and it is important that we have the benefit of their expertise when creating youth development programs.

Finally, let me say that there is no "one size fits all" way to helping our children become productive members of our society. We must allow for an array of programs to address the variety of youth in a variety of communities. This bill provides the flexibility necessary to allow each community to tailor their youth development efforts to their specific needs.

Investing wisely in children and youth by engaging them in positive activities is more effective and much less costly than waiting until young lives have taken a bad turn. The Younger American's Act is a common sense approach to what should be a high national priority. Young people are 23 percent of our population, but 100 percent of our future. This bill will help them achieve their full potential and their rightful place as valued—and valuable—members of their communities.

Let's make sure that "we leave no child behind." General Powell has promised to use his new role as Secretary of State to spread the America's Promise message on the value of youth around the world. Let's be certain that his message is heard and taken to heart in the U.S. Congress.

MOVE SWIFTLY ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, as the 107th Congress convenes today to begin work on the nation's business, one of our first priorities must be reform of our campaign finance laws. In each of the past two Congresses, the House passed comprehensive legislation in this area by substantial bipartisan majorities. In this Congress, we can and must move swiftly to pass campaign finance legislation and assure that comprehensive reforms become the law of the land.

Later this month, I will be joining with many of my colleagues in cosponsoring bipartisan legislation offered by Mr. SHAYS of Connecticut and Mr. MEEHAN of Massachusetts. The Shays-Meehan bill is genuine, meaningful re-

form to prohibit the use of so-called "soft" money that pollutes our campaign system with unregulated, unlimited and unconscionable sums of money from special interests. Both major parties have become addicted to this flood of money. By adopting the Shays-Meehan bill, we all can just say "No" to soft money.

Another bill that I am cosponsoring is more limited, but no less important. This is the "Stand by Your Ad" bill offered by our colleague DAVID PRICE of North Carolina to require that advertisements put out by campaigns carry a clear and prominent statement identifying which candidate is responsible for the ad. This simple step toward accountability could do wonders for improving the tone of our campaigns. I commend Mr. PRICE for his work on this bill and I am proud to join him.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NOTCH BABY ACT OF 2001

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Notch Baby Act of 2001, which would create a new alternative transition computation formula for Social Security benefits for those seniors born between 1917 and 1926. These seniors, who are generally referred to as "Notch Babies," have been receiving lower monthly Social Security benefits than seniors born the years just prior to or after this ten year period.

There are those who dispute the existence of a Notch problem. However, take into consideration the following example presented in a 1994 report by the Commission on Social Security Notch issue. There are two workers who retired at the same age with the same average career earnings. One was born on December 31, 1916 and the other was born on January 2, 1917. Both retired in 1982 at the age of 65. The retiree born 1917 received \$110 a month less in Social Security benefits than did the retiree born just two weeks before in 1916. Also take into consideration that there are currently more than 6 million seniors in our Nation who are faced with this painfully obvious inequity in the Social Security benefit computation formula.

By phasing in an improved benefit formula over five years, the Notch Baby Act of 2001 will restore fairness and equity in the Social Security benefit computation formula for the Notch Babies. For once and for all this legislation would put to rest the Notch issue, and it would put an end to the constant barrage of mailings and fundraising attempts, which target our Nation's seniors in the name of Notch reform. Our seniors deserve fairness and equality in the Social Security system. They deserve an end to the repeated Congressional stalling on this issue. I urge my colleagues in the House to discuss this issue with the seniors in their districts, and to join me in ensuring that the Notch issue is addressed in the 107th Congress.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL COMMUNITIES ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, my colleague Representative SHERWOOD BOEHLERT and I are proud to reintroduce the Small Communities Assistance Act.

For years, small towns and villages have labored to satisfy environmental regulations tailored to the needs and resources of major cities. This bipartisan legislation would direct the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide more help for small communities in meeting their environmental obligations.

Larger urban areas can have an entire environmental services department that employs dozens of people to interpret the EPA's complex and sometimes costly regulations. At the same time, small communities often do not have even one full-time employee assigned to this task. This bill will assist small communities and give them a larger voice in drafting regulations with a fair and balanced approach considering they do not have the staff and financial capabilities of larger communities.

People who live in small towns are proud of their community and their environment. They want to comply with health and environmental standards in order to leave a healthy legacy for their children. However, small communities need flexibility in order to comply with environmental regulations as they seek to protect their families' health and the local environment. One size does not fit all.

The Small Communities Assistance Act would require each EPA regional office to establish a Small Town Ombudsman Office to advocate for small communities. The EPA would also develop a plan to increase the involvement of small communities in the regulatory review process so that EPA regulations would be flexible enough to account for small town priorities. The agency would be required to survey small communities and establish a small community advisory committee.

AN EXCELLENT SELECTION FOR TRANSPORTATION

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend President-elect Bush for his nomination of Norman Mineta to be his Secretary of Transportation. Secretary Mineta will bring great distinction to his new role, building upon a distinguished record in this body and as Secretary of Commerce.

When I was first elected to Congress, Norm Mineta took me, a freshman in the minority party, around Congress and helped in any way he could. I will never forget that generosity, but it reflects the personality of this true gentleman. Secretary Mineta has lived a life that we can all learn from.

Growing up in California during the Second World War, I have strong feelings on the national shame perpetrated against the Japanese-American community during the war. I

have been touched by how that experience formed Norm, a period prominently displayed in his official portrait that hangs in 2167 Rayburn. Instead of harboring a lifetime of bitterness against the country that imprisoned him and his family, Norm Mineta devoted much of his life to public service. He has helped make this a better nation and has helped us become better Americans.

During his 21 year in this House, Norm Mineta was a leader in transportation policy and a fair chairman of what was then called the Committee on Public Works. He is well suited to leading the Department of Transportation in the years to come. Congress—and this body—has fought hard to provide our nation the funding necessary to address the many problems facing transportation today. Norm Mineta brings with him the intelligence, experience, and disposition to be an excellent member of the new Administration and I look forward to working with him in the years to come.

A BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I fulfill the pledge I made to the citizens of southern Missouri to introduce and work tirelessly to pass an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, that requires a balanced Federal budget. Over the course of the past several decades, fiscal irresponsibility has produced a Federal debt that is fast approaching \$5 trillion. That's trillion, with a 't,' Mr. Speaker. A debt of \$5 trillion is a mind-boggling figure, but it can be placed in a much clearer perspective. A child born today immediately inherits nearly \$20,000 of debt, owed directly to Uncle Sam. The same is true for every American. The era of continuing annual budget deficits must end, and it is clear that the only way to restore conservative fiscal values to the Nation's budget is to pass the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

The stakes in this debate could not be more important. The fiscal future of the United States hinges on the ability of Congress and the President to make the difficult choices required to balance the Federal budget. It's more than debating trillion dollar figures. It's about making our economy stronger and providing every working American family with a better chance to make ends meet. A balanced budget will strengthen every sector of our economy with lower interest rates that will help families stretch each paycheck further. Home mortgages, automobiles, and a better education will become more affordable to every working family, making the American Dream closer to reality for all.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to working with my colleagues in the new Congress to see that the balanced budget constitutional amendment is passed and sent to the States for ratification. A constitutional amendment is certainly no substitute for direct action on the part of the Congress. However, we have seen time and time again instances where those who object to conservative fiscal responsibility find convenient excuses to deny the American people a balanced budget. An unbreakable enforcement mechanism is clearly needed to

ensure that those who would continue to spend our children's future further into debt are not able to do so.

I also want to make plain that the Social Security trust fund has no place in this debate. The independent trust fund is a sacred trust between generations and must never be used to balance the budget or hide the true size of the deficit.

Commonsense conservatives in Congress and the American people are committed to balancing the budget. I look forward to working throughout this session with all of my colleagues and the White House to pass the balanced budget constitutional amendment on a bipartisan basis. The obligations we owe to hard working American families, their children, and our Nation's future generations deserve nothing less than decisive action to preserve our future by balancing the budget. A constitutional amendment will ensure this outcome.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to reintroduce the Women's Right to Know Act in the 107th Congress. This bill ensures that so-called "gag rules" upon women's access to information about reproductive health care are not imposed by the states or the federal government in the future.

First imposed during the Reagan and Bush Administrations by executive order, the gag rule denied federal funds for any health care clinic whose employees counseled, referred, or discussed terminating a pregnancy in any way. If they did so, the clinic's funding could be rescinded. Congressional efforts to overturn these executive orders were vetoed.

Thankfully, President Clinton revoked the gag rule as his first order of business in 1993. While this marked major progress towards better health care for women on a federal level, it did not prevent individual states from imposing statewide gag rules. Currently two states, Missouri and Colorado, have gag rules—with Pennsylvania's state senate having considered and narrowly defeated a similar law in May 2000. With statewide "gag rules" on the rise, the threat of a federal "gag rule" being re-implemented looms on the horizon.

Contrary to the predictions of many gag rule supporters, abortion rates have not been linked to a reversal of this federal policy. In fact, abortion facts actually declined to a twenty year low in 1997 with record drops in teen pregnancy.

Leaving the gag rule to the power of executive order is playing Russian roulette with women's reproductive health. We must intensify our efforts to safeguard a women's access to full reproductive options and prevent the gag rule from ever being imposed again. For the government to withhold information about reproductive health care in a violation of our democratic principles and an unconscionable act against the people it intends to serve.

The Women's Right to Know Act ensures that gag rules will not be imposed by the states or the federal government in the future. This legislation states that no state or federal

government entity may limit the right of any health care provider to supply, or any person to receive, factual information about reproductive health services, including family planning, prenatal care, adoption, or abortion.

The government has no right to interfere with private health care decisions. I therefore urge my colleagues to support this legislation and allow Americans to have access to complete, factual information so that can make informed decisions about their health care.

INTRODUCING H.R. 218, THE COMMUNITY PROTECTION ACT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing my legislation to permit qualified current and former law enforcement officers to carry a concealed firearm in any jurisdiction. This measure is called the Community Protection Act, and I have requested that it be assigned the same bill number as in previous Congresses—H.R. 218.

The Community Protection Act provides three benefits to our police and to our country.

First, it effectively provides thousands more trained cops on the beat—at zero taxpayer cost.

Second, it enables current and former law enforcement officers to protect themselves and their families from criminals. When a criminal completes his or her sentence, that criminal can find where their arresting officer lives, where their corrections officer travels, and other information about our brave law enforcement personnel and their families.

And, third, it helps keep our communities safer from criminals.

This measure is very similar to the H.R. 218 reported by the Judiciary Committee in the 106th Congress.

Members and the public interested in additional background information on the Community Protection Act, I encourage them to read the Judiciary Committee report accompanying H.R. 218 from the 105th Congress (H. Rept. 105-819), my testimony before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime Tuesday, July 22, 1997, or my statement from introduction in the 106th Congress on January 6, 1999.

I urge all my colleagues to support this important common sense anti-crime legislation.

TRIBUTE TO MARK MIODUSKI

HON. DAVID R. OBEY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 3, 2001

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, there are many people in this institution who work tirelessly and often thanklessly in order to improve the lives of the people we serve. Those who benefit from their work will never recognize their faces or know their names and day after day and year after year they produce a better country. Today, I rise to pay special tribute to one of them. I offer my most sincere gratitude to Mark Mioduski who has recently left the minority staff of the House Appropriations Committee after fourteen years of distinguished service to the federal government.